

**Home, Washington Historic District  
Survey and Inventory**

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## B. Executive Summary

**Background:** This survey and accompanying inventory of buildings and history of the Home Historic District, Pierce County, Washington, update and supplement Caroline Gallacci's 1988 inventory. Home is the first planned community in Pierce County.

**Location:** Home is located on a southeast-facing slope on Von Geldern Cove in Puget Sound, 20 miles southwest of Gig Harbor.

**Historical Overview:** In 1896, after residing in the failed utopian community of Glennis, near Eatonville, Sylvia and George Allen, Annie and B.F. Odell, and Delana and Oliver Verity settled on Von Geldern Cove, sometimes known as Joe's Bay. Glennis had failed due to an expansion of restrictions and rules. The founders of Home sought to form a community where the only restrictions on personal actions were on those that caused harm to others. This was a reaction to a combination of 19<sup>th</sup> century social tensions related to governmental and moral constraint and to dehumanizing labor practices.

The communitarian arrangement at Home was based on a cooperative, Mutual Home Association, granting each member 2 acres of land upon which houses were built and small farms cultivated. Originally, Home comprised 217 acres divided among 66 blocks bordered by streets in an irregularly shaped plat. Most regularly shaped blocks were comprised of four, 1-acre lots.

Home became an attractive refuge for sometimes radical, free-thinkers seeking to free themselves of conventional social conditions. Among these, the early feminist Emma Goldman had come to lecture in Home and the labor organizer, Jay Fox settled there. Home was, in its early years, the source of anarchist publications, *Discontent*, *Mother of Progress*, *The Agitator* and *The New Era*.

The assassination of President William McKinley in 1901 heightened suspicion of anarchists and anarchist communities. A group of Tacoma residents failed to retaliate for the assassination when a ferry captain refused to land in Home. Suspicion of anarchism did not end, however, and in 1909, the community reverted to private land ownership. In 1919, the Mutual Home Association was dissolved.

**Development:** Photographic documentation of the earliest settlement reveals a number of rustic, utilitarian outbuildings sharing a cleared slope with a few seemingly more permanent houses. The quality of building in Home improved throughout the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including a number of houses and a few community buildings: a ball-field grandstand, Liberty Hall, and the still standing Home School. During the 1920s, construction improved further and Home began to take on the characters of many small, northwest communities. Continued development of Home through the 20<sup>th</sup> century follows a conventional pattern of exurban Depression era, wartime and postwar building.

**Buildings:** Several buildings have been identified as contributing to the Home Historic District. These include the Kranz House (1896), Home School (1902), a chicken house (1905), the Allen House (1920), the Stencil House (1927), several Depression era houses notably the Dadisman House (1933), and the Wahlberg Boat Shed (1940). These buildings range in material and craftsmanship but contribute to the character of the historic district as an eclectic mix of small residential and agricultural buildings. The district itself lacks the architectural homogeneity of many other historic districts but maintains a scale and texture consistent with the early aspirations of Home.

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## **F. Project Background**

Home is roughly 15 miles west of Tacoma and 20 miles south-west of Gig Harbor located on Von Geldern Cove (Joe's Bay), part of Carr Inlet, in Puget Sound. Home, incorporated in 1909, comprises 217 acres.

Home became a Pierce County Historic District in 1990. Pierce County historic preservation staff conducted a survey in Home in 1988 to prepare for a historic district nomination to the Pierce County Register of Historic Places. Although this original survey provided helpful information, a more intensive survey was needed to provide more detailed individual, property-based information including significant physical features, building style and method. This intensive survey, inventory and design manual, provided to the Pierce County Historic Preservation Program, aims to enhance the knowledge base of the Pierce County staff, the citizens in Home and citizens-at-large regarding contextual history. This includes a history of development and significant design and vernacular elements in Home to provide design guidance for future development.

David Strauss, Kevin Kane and Boaz Ashkenazy of SHKS Architects, conducted field study in the Home Historic District during the months of April and May, 2004, interviewed several long-time residents, attended several public meetings, and reviewed literature on Home and the history of American utopian communities. David Strauss, Ph.D. has written this document.

Airyang Julia Park, Pierce County Historic Preservation Program Coordinator of the Pierce County Advance Planning Division has directed this survey and coordinated the work with the residents of Home. The recollections of Sylvia Retherford, a descendant of Sylvia and George Allen, and Evelyn Evans, descended of Martin Dadisman, assisted immeasurably. Tim Kezele, Director of the Key Peninsula Historical Society Museum, was generous with his time and knowledge of Home.

While the district was registered, the need for a more detailed survey and inventory has been evident by the requirement to identify significant contributing physical and historical elements - the information presently missing from the existing survey - in order to conduct design reviews required of building proposals that would alter the properties located within Home Historic District. The eventual conversion of the existing vested and buildable lots located in Home to additional residential developments expected in the coming decades has highlighted the need for a means to advise property owners on the preservation of the distinct characteristics of Home.

The new survey report and Inventory forms will be located with the State of Washington Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (<http://www.oahp.wa.gov/>), the Pierce County Advance Planning Division of Planning and Land Services Department, and the Key Peninsula Historical Museum.

### III. Research Design

**A. Objectives.** This project intends to identify and evaluate the historical significance of Home, its historical, geographic, landscape and plan character. Archaeological sites and Traditional Cultural Properties have not been addressed.

The information presented will be used by property owners in their efforts to preserve, restore and add to their historic properties and by the Pierce County Landmarks Commission in review of development and building activities within the historic district.

The Home Historic District represents a community within a semi-rural context. The state Historic Preservation Plan seeks to protect Washington's rural heritage. Preservation efforts will protect the historic character of the district and may have the benefit of retaining or increasing property values. Home also holds potential as a site for heritage tourism. Holding public meetings to discuss the project has the benefit of developing wider interest in the unique character of Home.

**B. Survey Methodology:** The Home Historic District boundaries were delineated during the initial survey conducted in 1988 based upon the 1909 Articles of Incorporation. The designation of Home Historic District to Pierce County of Historic Register followed in 1990. The earlier survey served as one of the data bases of this project. Sylvia Retherford's scrapbooks containing archival photographs and clippings held at the University of Washington Special Collections have been enormously helpful. Photographs from both the University of Washington and the Key Peninsula Historical Museum reveal much about the early environment of Home. Several issues of *The New Era* and *Discontent*, *Mother of Progress* provide insight into the intellectual and everyday life at Home. Stewart Holbrook's article in *The American Scholar*, Autumn 1946 sketched the socio-political framework of Home. General sources such as Richard Trahair's *Utopias and Utopians: An Historical Dictionary*; Robert S. Fogarty's *Dictionary of American Communal and Utopian History*; have been useful in outlining the breadth of utopian efforts. Murray Morgan's *The Last Wilderness* and Charles LeWarne's *Utopias on Puget Sound 1885-1915* provide historical insight into the specific character of Home.

Field research revealed benefits of linking archival materials with the extant physical reality and oral history. At a first public meeting, historical accounts were provided by Evelyn Evans and Chester Dadisman descendants of Martin van Buren Dadisman and Sylvia Retherford, a descendant of George and Sylvia Allen. Additional information was gained from Nancy Lind, Tim Kezelle and Mike Diamond, local residents interested in preserving history of Home.

The survey has involved archival research, field research and interviews. Field research has included a walk through Home with Sylvia Retherford and Nancy Lind and an interview with Evelyn Evans.

A digital photographic survey of the district is part of this survey.

The original plat map last dated June 26, 1909 formed the basis for the study. Orthophoto aerial views were employed at the initial public meeting.

The Field Site Numbers for inventoried properties have been based on the lots indicated in the original plat. The prefix letters, B, IP and OP indicate, respectively, lots within the historic district, lots within the original plat but outside the historic district boundaries, and significant lots outside both the original plat and the historic district.

Public meetings were held on December 17, 2003, June 24, 2004, and August 5, 2004.

**C. Expectations:** More than 80 sites were surveyed and designated contributing or non-contributing to the historic district based upon the unique character of the structure, the integrity of the historic fabric, and the significance of the site in the history of Home. Most of the sites surveyed are private residences. Fragments remain of several non-residential properties including the pilings of the original general store. The original school is now a private residence. The street fabric itself constitutes a significant part of the historic texture of Home.

**D. Delineate Area Surveyed:** While expanding somewhat beyond the original 1909 Home plat (refer to map), the Home Historic District comprises an irregularly shaped area stretching northwest from Von Geldern Cove to a maximum of roughly 1,000 feet across Key Peninsula Highway. The historic district also includes an area at the west end of the cove and an area just south of the end of the cove. Several sites outside the historic district are discussed including the location of Home's first art school and the residence of Jay Fox.

In April 1981, James Vandermeer completed an inventory form for the Home School. Caroline Gallacci prepared inventory forms

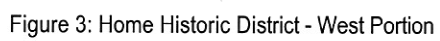


in 1988 for a number of sites in preparation for the district designation. Both the Home School and the David Dadisman House are on the National Register of Historic Places.

**E. Integration with Planning Process:** The Pierce County Landmarks Commission intends to employ this new intensive survey and inventory, and design manual in its consideration of future development within the District including new construction and additions and alterations to existing buildings.



Figure 2: Home Historic District - Key Map







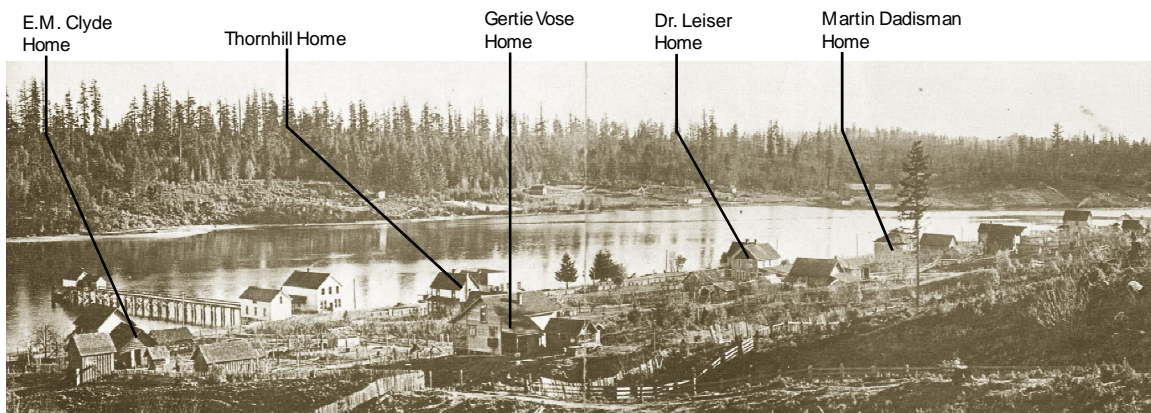
#### IV. Historical Overview



6. Home from the south across Von Geldern Cove.

Home is situated on a sloping site facing southeast over Von Geldern Cove. Though the first growth of Douglas Fir and Western Red Cedar timber had been logged during the initial settlement, a number of stands of second growth timber characterize a sylvan setting beginning midway up the slope. Along the waterfront, a concrete bulkhead and relics of piers give way to a single small residential complex. Across the cove are several houses and some open meadows and orchards. Key Peninsula Highway spans the end of the cove on a low bridge. Beyond the bridge, trees grow thicker and a complex of buildings, including an old boat shed, describe a waterfront pastoral. The topography climbs gently across Key Peninsula Highway. The grid of Home begins to give way to larger parcels of land and some cleared farmsteads.

Founded on principles of self-sufficiency and separation from the trappings of modern commerce, the background of Home lies in the social and economic crises of the late-nineteenth century. Late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century settlement of the northwestern United States took place within an atmosphere of social, political and economic strife. Industrial expansion owing to developments in manufacturing namely the assembly line placed enormous pressure upon normal social relations and the place of work in communities. Labor became a repetitive activity demanding little skill in the mass-production of consumer products. Factories were thought to be like large machines, whose operating parts were the laborers themselves. In the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, workers organized in an effort to resist the exploitative efforts of industrialists.<sup>1</sup> A bomb detonated by self-described anarchists and socialists at the Haymarket in Chicago in 1886, stemmed from labor's resistance to the indignities of factory work and labor's objective of an 8 hour work day.



5. Photograph of Home (c. 1900).



7. Bridge across Joe's Bay  
(c.1897) facing north. King  
House at left.

Despite the dehumanizing effects of mass-production, conditions elsewhere were sufficiently dire that America rose to prominence as a refuge for immigrants from both Asia and Europe, fleeing famine and persecution. Sweatshops constituted an alternative to these immigrants.

The western expansion envisioned by Thomas Jefferson was provided a skeleton in the development of the railroad. By 1873, the Northern Pacific Railroad reached Tacoma but it was not until 1887 that transcontinental service from St. Paul, Minnesota to Portland, Oregon linked the northwest with the continental interior. Tacoma, of course, grew on the strengths of its port and timber.

In the midst of labor crises attending the industrial revolution, a rural economic crisis of the early 1890s led, eventually, to a worldwide depression in 1893. In a social context formed by declining working conditions, labor unrest and then by crippling depression, the appeal of a society founded on principles of cooperation underscored the influence of Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*. Bellamy summarized and popularized a century of socialist thought stretching from Charles Fourier through Marx. Bellamist settlements in Glennis and the settlements of Burley, Equality and Freeland, all in Washington, exemplified the broader movement to build socialist utopia communities throughout the United States.

While advancing a clear social agenda, these communities also represented an alternative to the increasingly threatening modern metropolis. The alternative lay in leaving cities behind to carve a self-sufficient life in the retreating wilderness. Self-sufficient ambitions took one of two forms: a return to an abundant nature





9. Home circa 1907.

that could provide ample food for survival and a return to the land dependent upon hard but rewarding farm work.<sup>2</sup> Exodus from the cities and society would lead to the promised land of just, cooperative, self-sufficient communities. Some of these communities failed due to excessive administrative constraint, some simply because of the challenges of cooperative living.

### **A. Early Home**

Leaving the failed Bellamist colony of Glennis in 1896, Oliver and Delana Verity, B.F. and Annie Odell and George and Sylvia Allen established a community at Home, purchasing acreage from the Miegs Lumber Company. Based on Department of Agriculture statistics, the founders of Home reasoned that subsistence and a degree of comfort could be assured on 2 acres - one acre for a house site and the other acre to grow food, and so set out a grid of 386 x 386 blocks and 30 wide streets.<sup>3</sup> Numbered streets ran perpendicular to the shore of Joe's Bay, lettered streets intersected the numbered streets creating an orthogonal grid. Between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets, the grid shifts in response to the shoreline, forming an irregular pattern of

blocks stretching west-northwest along 6<sup>th</sup>. The Odells nevertheless, settled and built a small house across the narrow, southwest end of Joe's Bay. Construction of a dock in 1897 at the foot of 8<sup>th</sup> Street and pilings for a county bridge in 1898 enabled Home's connection to the rest of Puget Sound and Key Peninsula.

The Mutual Home Association held all land—streets, agricultural and house lots. That the streets were implicitly incorporated into the two-acre calculation of subsistence underlies a remarkable, if not entirely unique, attitude toward the public land. Productive land and the roads providing access to them were conceived as inextricable. Home represents a specifically social return to the land. That subsistence farming did not necessarily imply distance from other families was an unstated foundation principle.



8. Home circa 1907.

By 1898, Verity had begun publishing *Discontent: Mother of Progress*, a newspaper with a combination of local news and broad political position papers. By June of 1898, Home's population had grown to 22 including 14 men. Later that year, Martin Dadisman arrived from Virginia, purchased forty acres plus additional properties,<sup>4</sup> and in 1899 became the manager of the cooperative store and purchased an additional eighty-nine acres to the south. By 1900, the population grew to 65—20 men, 18 women, and 37 children—and Dadisman had amassed approximately 148 acres. Some of this land was sold to the Mutual Home Association and made available for settlement. Dadisman also contributed land for a park along the waterfront. In 1901, *Discontent* reported 700 fruit trees, acknowledged that the 12 cows in the colony were not enough to supply our needs, and the path along the bay is beginning to take on the appearance of a genuine road.



10. Liberty Hall (c. 1905, demolished).

The completion of Liberty Hall (now demolished), Home's first common building, and the formation of a baseball team in 1903 signaled further commitment to the objectives of 108 people living together. Construction of the Home School in 1907 followed. In these respects, it is important to understand the character of anarchism at the turn of the last century. The first families of Home viewed anarchism in terms of social liberty freedom from the constraints of government bureaucracy and, perhaps more significantly, from the deleterious influences of institutions, big industry and commerce.

This distinction became critical in 1901 when the assassination of President William McKinley by a self-described anarchist inspired a number of Tacoma residents, members of the anti-anarchist Loyal League of North America, attempted to sail for Home with violent intent. Refusing to charter his boat for a planned assault on Home, the non-resident steam ship pilot Carl Lorenz has been credited with saving the colony or at least preventing a bloody riot.

In 1905, three years before the first Model T rolled off the assembly line in Detroit, the County widened the road between Lakebay and Home and built a vehicle bridge at the end of the bay.

Jay Fox, who was in attendance at the Haymarket Incident and had been a founding delegate of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), moved to Home from Chicago in 1910. From Home, Fox published *The Agitator* until 1912. While best known for a published defense of nude swimming and the subsequent trial, Fox wrote this summary of Home's development in the first issue in 1910:



11. Home School (c. 1910),  
1800 C Street



*Fifteen years ago three pilgrim families landed here, built shacks on the shore and began hewing their way into the dense forest of giant evergreens... Others came, and as like attracts like, they too were of the no rule order of intellect, and presently there was an Anarchist colony... This Colony differs from other colonies in that it was not started with the object of proving anything. It grew naturally, as all things should grow; and having grown in this way whatever it does prove counts.*

Fox was friendly with Emma Goldman, the most noted woman anarchist in the United States at the time, a feminist and free-speech advocate, who had visited Home in 1898 and delivered several lectures. Emma Goldman was not impressed with the community; she thought the people were more interested in vegetables and chickens than in propaganda. To her, Home was the anarchist graveyard. <sup>5</sup>



12. Home (c. 1901). Collection of Evelyn Evans.



## B. Building Home

Early photographs of Home show scattered homesteads issuing down to the cove with a few, tidy, painted structures along the water. For the most part, the buildings were gable or single shed structures, some with lean-to additions. While historic photographs reveal at least one log building, outbuildings appear, almost uniformly, to have been sheathed with board and batten or shakes while primary structures were sheathed with bevel siding or horizontal channel siding. Outbuildings were invariably single room structures.

For more complex structures, pattern books<sup>6</sup> published in the late nineteenth century would have provided fundamental planning and construction principles for even novices to draw on. In 1908, Sears published its Modern Homes Catalog followed, in 1910, by the Montgomery Ward Catalog and, in 1912, by the Harris Homes Catalog. These catalogs provided materials and instructions for the construction of a variety of house types. Construction knowledge at Home appears to have been based on a peculiar combination of frontier wisdom, carpentry skill<sup>7</sup> and the availability of pamphlets, patterns and kits. In any case, building appears to have been a community affair—residents organized a building party to construct a house at 6<sup>th</sup> and A Streets for Lois Waisbrooker, a noted feminist who moved to Home in 1901.



14. Home (c. 1900). Collection of Evelyn Evans.



13. Home (c. 1900). Collection of Evelyn Evans.



15. King House (c. 1900).  
KPHSM.

Conveniences in early Home were few but by 1908, a telephone exchange was established at the King House, a two story, classic box with a wrap-around porch (photo).

The dock pictured in an early photograph of Home, dates the photograph after 1897. The presence of what appears to have been the school flanking the dock access dates the picture before 1900. Development comprises about nine houses and assorted outbuildings scattered near the waterfront on a gentle slope largely cleared of timber.

The original school and Home Store flank the access to the wharf. Both of these buildings appear to be the tidiest white painted, gable structures sheathed with horizontal siding. Entry to the store is from A street through a door centered between four windows and beneath three second story windows. The school is a one and one half story building with three windows facing west and a window in the gable end facing north.

Across A Street are several two-story houses with gables perpendicular to the slope. Outbuildings are scattered around the houses but are oriented with the street grid. While the primary houses appear to be sheathed with painted horizontal siding either shiplap or bevel siding the majority of outbuildings are sheathed with board and batten siding. Roofs are shingle or shake. Windows on the houses are conventionally but neatly trimmed. Eave and gable roof overhangs appear to have been slight somewhat greater at the gable ends.

The presence of a two-story pyramidal roofed house toward the west and a two-story L-shaped house, suggests a growing commitment to the place and the capacity for increasing dwelling comfort. In the foreground of the photograph is a one and one half story, horizontal sided shack with gable parallel to the shore and a lean-to porch facing south. A lean-to shed and a small, board and batten gable structure to the north indicate the predominant pattern of development on the lots closest to the water: the house lot nearer the water, the agricultural lot uphill.

A defining characteristic of early Home was the presence of both rough-hewn roadways and fences defining discreet lots. The fences in the photograph follow the incipient grid of streets and lots over a rolling contour. Some were simple stockade fences sections of logs stuck in the ground. Others were comprised of poles spanned by what appear to have been milled material.

In the middle ground of the photograph is a lone fir tree, the rest having been cleared for sale or use on the site. There is evidence of some replanting both along the waterfront and in the middle ground.

Outside this photograph to the southwest is the still extant Kranz house (photo). The house was built in 1896 by the Odell s and transferred to the Kranz family in 1902. The house is a simple, gable-roofed, shiplap sided wood building with a porch facing the end of Von Geldern Cove to the north. BF Odell, one of the founders of Home, had selected a site at some remove from Oliver Verity and George Allen.

A fine photograph of the George and Sylvia Allen house dated 1900 presents what appears to have been a T- or L-shaped, two-story, shingle house with porches on both the first and second stories (photo). A dirt path reaches to wood steps between some low plantings. Windows were conventionally trimmed, double-hung windows with an slightly articulated head trim. The porch structure attests to some limitations of frontier carpentry: posts do not align and the broad, undersized beam spanning the center of the porch sags beneath the weight of the sleeping porch above.



16. Kopelle Treehouse circa 1900.



17. Kranz (Odell) House, 1896, 1121 Key Peninsula Highway



18. Allen House (c. 1900, demolished). Collection of Sylvia Retherford.



19. House (c.1898), 17119 3rd Avenue.



20. Sprague House (c. 1900), 16919 9th Avenue.



21. Storage and garage building. Rebuilt 1950s, 1815 B Street.

There remain a number of structures from this first phase of Home's development. The Kranz (originally Odell) house at the southwest end of Von Geldern Cove is the oldest house in Home, dating from the arrival of the Odell, Verity and Allen families in 1896. It remains a simple, gabled house with tall, double hung windows and a central door facing the cove.

The house at 17119 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, sited high on the bluff off A Street and dated circa 1898, is a cross gable structure with a number of alterations. Presumably, the house was situated uphill from the agricultural lot to the south. However, its primary public aspect—a noble 1½ story gable facing south over Von Geldern Cove—represents the commitment of early settlers moving from shacks to houses.

A 2-story house at 16919 9<sup>th</sup> Street at the intersection of 9<sup>th</sup> and D Streets is dated in the earliest settlement period. A simple building sheltered beneath a gable with shallow eaves, the house is situated several blocks up from the water. This position on a topographic bench afforded a fine agricultural site. This had been the site of a winery with a southwest facing vineyard. A fairly large agricultural building to the east is significant in shaping the character of Home.

The massive 2-story, structure at 1815 B Street was considered the original Home Store by Gallacci, moved from its original site. Moving a building this size in the first decade in Home would have required unusual field engineering. Evelyn Evans has stated the building is a former storage building, a replica of the original Dadisman house at 7th and A. Nevertheless, the building is significant in scale and a familiar house pattern.



### C. Filling-In (1909-1929)

The plat map filed with the County in 1909 is both a summary of the physical plan of Home and an instrument for the conversion, later, of the communitarian structure of landholding to a system of private land ownership. In 1909, an amendment to the articles of incorporation of the Mutual Home Association enabled the officers to convey by deed to association members the fee-simple title to their land, leading some members to acquire land then sell it, violating the original precepts of communitarian ownership of land. In 1919, The Mutual Home Association was ordered dissolved and the land was sold to private individuals, mostly to the members and the only remaining communitarian enterprises were Liberty Hall and the Home Store. The conversion to private landholding signaled a transformation of the fundamental precept of Home and began to dissolve the original communitarian spirit. With this dissolution, Charles LeWarne wrote commonly held property Liberty Hall, the sea wall, the sidewalks, and a cemetery had fallen into disrepair.

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The first Liberty Hall burned in 1914 and was quickly replaced with a new hall built over the water between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets. In 1919, the Mutual Home Association was ordered dissolved by the court, and, in 1921, lots became available for sale. Although the original anarchistic and communitarian spirit of Home persisted, in the 1920 s, Home began to take on more of the conventional characteristics of the rural town.

Although Emma Goldman, perhaps Home s most famous visitor, had opposed mandatory conscription of soldiers during World War I, we were unable to find documents of opposition to the war. The shipyard s in Bremerton had been operating since the late nineteenth century and were in full production for the war effort. By that time, the *Agitators* presses had stopped running.

Through the early years of Home, residents subsisted on timber sales, abundant seafood and ducks in Von Geldern Cove. Where subsistence fell short, jobs around the south Puget Sound provided income. At some point, chicken farming and the sale of eggs became a significant cottage industry.<sup>9</sup> The Home Store employed as many as 7 egg candlers who checked eggs for freshness and then packed them for shipment. Several chicken houses remain. Among those, the long, split gable chicken house at 17120 4<sup>th</sup> Street is notable for the preservation of its original character.

Connections of Home to surrounding communities expanded significantly in the 20 s. The Peninsula Light Company was formed in 1925. According to Sylvia Retherford s scrapbooks,



22. Chicken house (c. 1905), 17120 4<sup>th</sup> Street.



23. Greenhalgh House (now Deacon), 17215 7<sup>th</sup> Street.



24. Allen House (c. 1920), 1508 A Street.



25. House (c. 1922), 1606 A Street.



26. House (c.1925), 1300 A Street.



27. House (c.1927), 16800 11th Avenue.

resident Charles Greenhalgh, who lived across 7<sup>th</sup> Street from the School and ballfield, was instrumental in bringing power to Home in 1926. By 1927, David Dadisman, then the manager of the store, was driving his car weekly for provisions and special orders from Tacoma or Seattle. While the car began to diminish the importance to Home of water-borne trade, boats remained the primary means of access for occasional visits to Tacoma by Home residents.

Little of the development of Home in the period 1909-1919 either remains or has been documented. A number of houses from 1920 forward demonstrate the conventionalization of Home: houses fashioned after fairly typical middle class patterns ubiquitous in the denser towns and cities in the Pacific Northwest. Two Craftsman houses on A Street are notable. The first, originally the George and Sylvia Allen house at 1508 A Street (1920), has a broad porch looking over Von Geldern Cove. Although the second story sleeping porch has been enclosed and the broad beam over the porch has been relieved by two posts, the house is remarkably unchanged from that in an early photograph. The second (1922), a block east at 1606 A Street, is somewhat more ornate as evidenced in the decorative barge board at the gable end and the coursed shingles. Despite having been significantly altered with additions and window modifications, this house remains a fine example of its time and of Home settlement.

Further west on A Street, high on a bluff is a very simple house with a few Shingle Style characteristics dating circa 1925. The broad low gable and porch face southeast over Von Geldern Cove. Additions to the north and east represent later alterations.

Some distance from A Street and the water view at 16800 11<sup>th</sup> Street is a small, dignified corner house. Craftsman detailing is evident in the south-facing front porch and east-facing side porch (now enclosed). The wood columns set on brick bases are gently tapered to the suggestion of a Tuscan Doric necking. Again, though altered enclosure of the side porch and window alterations have left a substantial amount of the original fabric of the house.

#### D. Depression and WWII (1929-1945)

Despite developing linkages to the Puget Sound economy, Home weathered the stock market crash of 1929 and the subsequent Great Depression largely on the basis of its own capacity for subsistence. Seafood and ducks remained plentiful and the Depression did not seem to have diminished the numbers of eggs produced. Nevertheless, the Home School was sold in 1934 to Anton and Akke van Tuyl for their own residence.

Charter and regular boat service to Tacoma and Seattle had been provided since the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century on the legendary Mosquito Fleet. The Fleet was consolidated by 1929 into two companies and in 1935, the Puget Sound Navigation Company concentrated the entire ferry system into a single organization. However, five years later, the Tacoma Narrows Bridge was supposed to provide a more direct vehicle linkage to the mainland but, legendarily, collapsed in high winds. Crossing the narrows by ferry in 1941 cost \$.50 for a car and passenger and the ferry was still transporting horse drawn vehicles.<sup>10</sup>

Activity in Home was limited during the Second World War though Home did send several men into battle.

The built evidence of Depression era Home is scant. However, building did not stop. A small house at 17016 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue is recorded as having been built in 1930. The house has an north-east facing lean-to sheltering a deep, 3-bay porch. There is a shallow shed dormer on the southwest, as well.

A number of small, refined houses were constructed in Home in the mid-1930 s. At 17010 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue is a modest (saltbox) clapboard house with a steep gable and no eave overhang. The house is clearly a residential pattern with roots outside agricultural building. In other words, Home was undergoing transformation from a subsistence community to a retreat or a bedroom community for work elsewhere. A somewhat larger telescoping saltbox house at 2018 A Street has a broad dormer facing the water. Additions to the north and west as well as a south-facing porch evidence expansion over the house's history. A small house with Tudor influences evident in the asymmetrical gable entry was built well above A Street at 1918.

Perhaps the most substantial house in Home is that constructed by David Dadisman in 1933. The house is a brick veneer house with two steeply pitched gables facing A Street and the Cove and a sunroom on the southwest built over a garage. Dadisman constructed the house on A Street from the original Home Store, practically centered along the waterfront. However unlikely in this one-time anarchist community, its siting and countenance suggest a manor house or the house of a successful merchant (which, of course, it was).



28. House (c.1930), 17016 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue.



29. House (c.1930), 17010 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue.



30. House (c.1930), 2018 A Street.



31. House (c.1930), 1918 A Street.



32. Dadisman House (c. 1933), 1814 A Street.



## E. Post WWII (1945-1980)

By 1950, the Tacoma Narrows Bridge was rebuilt opening the vehicle route between Tacoma and the Key Peninsula. The road enabled Home to become, on one hand, a convenient exurb of Tacoma and, on the other hand, a place for semi-rural retreats for the working populations of Tacoma and Seattle. The post-war development of Home reflects a trend toward suburbanization. The original pattern of development—houses and outbuildings oriented to the grid of streets—gave way to a freer organization of houses facing particular views or conforming to specific site conditions. The buildings of the post-war era also lost the homogeneity of the founding period. House patterns became more complex, more spread out and with larger expanses of glass oriented to the view. During the housing boom following the war, pre-fabricated houses became particularly attractive and cost-effective. Trailer homes arrived in Home, arranged along contour lines to minimize site costs.



33. House (c. 1951), 16612 10th Avenue.



34. House (c.1960 s), 16900 6th Avenue.



35. House (c.1971), 1604 A Street.



36. Wahlberg boat shed (c.1940), 1122 Key Peninsula Highway.

The house at 16612 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue at the intersection with B Street, constructed in 1951, is a shed set on a basement and with a porch wrapping four sides. High windows tucked just beneath the eaves and the reductive character of the building suggest the influence of both the agricultural shed—perhaps an expansion of the chicken house form—and mid-century modern design.

At 16900 6<sup>th</sup> Street is a house reminiscent of a chalet: an L-shaped dwelling space sheltered by a steeply pitched roof with deep overhangs. A second floor balcony with decorative railing projects to the southeast above a large porch. The size and pattern of openings are consistent with design strategies of the late 1960 s and the, despite the Alpine nostalgia, the dark stained wood building is not entirely out of place in Home.

In the house at 1604 A Street, the pattern of openings facing Von Geldern Cove employs a similar strategy of openings: large areas of fixed glazing opening over a deep porch to the south-east. Constructed in 1971 and recently altered, this house is an L-shaped, 2-story house beneath a low-sloped shed roof. It appears the main living space is on the second floor. The whole represents a significant leap in scale from most of the houses in Home.

South of the bridge over Von Geldern Cove is a small complex of several buildings including a house, two small sheds and a large boat building shed built in the early 1940 s. The property was at one time that of Captain Wahlberg. The boat shed is a large, simple gambrel barn built over the water on wood piles. The size and simplicity of the structure contribute to its characteristic dignity.



Over a century of development, residence size in Home has increased significantly and challenges the historic development pattern and scale of the original settlement. The house at 17116 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, a fairly simple, though large, house is characteristic of the trend toward expansion.

In 1958, the Lakebay post office was built in Home, just northwest of the end of the Bay. Home's post office, established in 1901, was decommissioned in 1903 for political reasons: distribution of *Discontent, Mother of Progress* from the Home Post Office was cause for closure in the heated political environment following McKinley's assassination. A photograph from 1908 shows a horse-drawn wagon with the then mailman, J.A. Sorenson. Rural free delivery became available at Home in 1917.

## **V. Analysis**

### **A. Survey Results**

Cultural resources testifying to the original settlement of Home are well preserved in print and photographic media by the Key Peninsula Historical Society and by key community members. Built evidence of the original settlement period, however, has been dwindling, as Home has become a more conventional, though pleasant, rural community. Development of Home in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century is represented in the removal of older structures and outbuildings and in the construction of ever larger houses.

The most notable properties documented include both the Home School and the David Dadisman House, both on the National Register of Historic Places. The oldest house in Home, the former Odell-Kranz House, and the house at 17119 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue (1898) both testify to the character of the early settlement.

A few modest buildings, possibly dating from the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are also notable for their longevity and simplicity. Though of uncertain dating, the house at 17310 2<sup>nd</sup> Street gives an impression of a structure similar to the earliest shacks constructed in Home and pictured in early photographic records. A chicken house dating from 1905 at 17120 4<sup>th</sup> Street indicates the type of building that supported Home's successful agricultural practice in the first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Finally, a storage shed associated with the house 16612 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue carries the patina and constructional character of the earliest structures in Home.



37. Early house, 17310 2nd Street.



38. Storage shed, 16612 10th Avenue.

Houses at 1300, 1508, and 1606 A Street from the 1920s describe Home as it was transformed to a conventional, exurban community: simple, refined houses along Home's main street. Another house from this era at the intersection of 11<sup>th</sup> and C Streets carries a modest monumentality of a Craftsman cottage with a columnar order.

The survey findings adhered closely to expectations. Few houses from the first settlement remain. This is, in part, due to the fact that residents would typically build and inhabit expedient, temporary shacks, at first, and construct more substantial permanent structures subsequently. So, Home's structures built in the first ten years, were intended for rapid replacement. Only later is economic well being evident in Home's building stock.

## B. Development Trends

Home is within a rural development zone in Pierce County. In this zone, the minimum building lot is 10 acres—far greater than the area of Home building lots. Consequently, the grandfathered density of Home may be attractive to dense residential development otherwise prohibited in the zone. Through the designation of the District, the interest of Home residents and the custodianship of the Pierce County Historical Commission, Home's unique character may be continued. Apart from development pressures, Home's historic properties are at risk of being subsumed by maintenance challenges and building alterations.

## VI. Recommendations

### A. Preservation Planning Issues

This is intended as a comprehensive survey but there remain gaps in our knowledge of Home. There is an absence of agreement within divergent oral histories about the locations and dates of key buildings. So, the challenge moving forward is less one of extent than of density of knowledge.

The platting of the lots within the District constitutes one of the most remarkable characteristics. An agricultural area of land gridded as a town in such a previously remote location is of great interest in understanding the nature of the American anarchist experience. Within that plat, the buildings are common, vernacular structures with little to suggest their uniqueness or their character as representatives of building types.

The efforts of the Pierce County Historical Commission and the Key Peninsula Historical Society have supported the survival of Home and the work of a number of individuals committed to preserving Home. This survey and associated design manual are intended to assist residents and property owners in considering building in this particular context.

The survey results support Washington's historic preservation goals particularly in relation to the concentration on heritage tourism. Home's location on the water makes it both attractive to visits and susceptible to real estate development. In this respect, the survey will serve to educate a growing number of visitors and residents about the historic value of the place.

Complemented by the design manual, the survey and inventory will assist residents in providing analytical tools for alterations and new construction and the Historical Commission in evaluating changes to both building fabrics and to the physical character of the district. The Home public seeks to realize a balance of heritage and development. These documents aim to guide that balance.

Among the research topics that have surfaced, the first is the delineation of the historic district boundary. Neither does the boundary follow the existing plat nor does it include a number of what might be considered properties central to the history of Home: Jay Fox's house and the site of the Mintz Art School across the bay and the Home Cemetery, across Key Peninsula Highway. Although, it is mistaken to think of Home as, in any way, isolationist in the context of other communities (the site of Home is bound inextricably to Lakebay as to Tacoma), consideration might be given to redrawing the boundary of Home.

## **B. Community Historic Preservation Concerns**

The Key Peninsula Historical Society and periodic Volksmarches providing historical insight represent opportunities for public awareness of Home. The Washington State Historical Museum and University of Washington Library have also maintained records of Home. Home also serves as a site for visits from school classes seeking some notion of the shrinking frontier of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the modest social experiment of a group of freethinking individuals.

The presence and authority of the Pierce County Historical Commission is the sole means toward protection of Home as a cultural resource. Nevertheless, the centrality within the founding principles of Home of freedom from bureaucratic control constitutes a serious threat to protection. Home was strongest as an idea: intellectual freedom and an interest in social justice are the lessons of Home. The place—the plat overlooking Van

Geldern Cove is simply a vessel recalling the idea. However, the placidity of anarchist Home depended significantly on the belief in the benefits of the loose collective and the aversion or resistance to ostentation in building.



## VII. Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The Homestead Strike in 1892 and the Pullman Strike in 1894 were efforts to improve the lives of workers. Pullman strike (1894) About the only difference between slavery at Pullman and what it was down South before the war, is that there the owners took care of the slaves when they were sick and here they don't.     worker to a reporter for the [Chicago Herald](#), 31 May 1890

<sup>2</sup> Peter J. Schmitt in *Back to Nature*, distinguished between back-to-nature and back-to-the-land movements. The first, relied upon an Arcadian ideal in contrast to the latter which held the pragmatic concerns of simply making a living. The political and social writer Bolton Hall wrote guides for making a living on limited acreage, *Three Acres and Liberty* in 1907 and *A Little Land and a Living* in 1908. The principles of self-sufficiency operating at Home, found a pragmatic voice in Hall's guides.

<sup>3</sup> The first issue of *The New Era* describes the founding of Home as follows: We have platted our land into blocks of four acres each, with a 60 foot street around them and along the water front have laid out a street so all can get to the water. *The New Era*, v.1, n.2. However, the 1909 plat indicates the 30' right-of-way.

<sup>4</sup> *Utopias on Puget Sound*. P.173. Charles LeWarne.

<sup>5</sup> Charles LeWarne. *Utopias on Puget Sound*, p.175.

<sup>6</sup> George Palliser. *Modern Homes for the People*. 1876.

<sup>7</sup> In his entry under Glennis Cooperative Industrial Company, Stockwell states that Oliver Verity was a carpenter and occasional politician. Foster Stockwell. *Encyclopedia of American Communes, 1663-1963*, p. 89.

<sup>8</sup> Charles LeWarne. *Utopians on Puget Sound*, p. 221.

<sup>9</sup> Chicken farming extended the back to the land movements of the early twentieth century. Charles Weeks, the founder of the quasi-utopian community of Runnymede, California, published a monthly magazine *One Acre and Independence* and an article *The Model Acre* in 1922.

<sup>10</sup> *Toll schedule for the Tacoma Narrows ferry, effective March 1, 1941*. University of Washington Special Collections, PH Coll. 11.32e.

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